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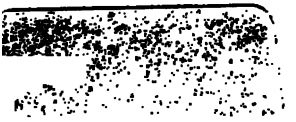

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WEIGHTS AND MEASURES

WEIGHTS
AND MEASURES

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WEIGHTS AND MEASURES

BY

FRANKLIN P. ADAMS

Author of "Tobogganing on Parnassus," "In Other Words," "By and Large"

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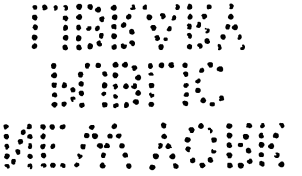

WHY DON'T YOU DO SOMETHING BIG?"

The Comic Bard is supposed to sigh
For the skill and the power to make you cry;
He's supposed to yearn, when he has the time,
To make you sob as you read his rhyme.
That thought in many a bard may be;
I only know how the thing strikes me.
For mine aim is low, mine ambish atomic:
I'm tickled to death when they call me comic.

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WEIGHTS
AND MEASURES

PROPERTY OF THE
CITY OF NEW YORK

A Penny's Worth of Poesy

LADY, when you noted a deflection
In my—as a rule—attentive gaze,
You articulated mild objection,
Using a not unfamiliar phrase.
Was I thinking solemn thoughts, if any?
Were my musings integers or naughts?
Wondered you; and offered me a penny
For my thoughts.

Done and done! I get a gentle joyance
Of a calm and melancholy kind
When I learn, in spite of your clairvoyance,
Yours is not the power to read my mind.
Yet, I've thought, with something of a sinking
Feeling that is hard to put in rhyme,
You must guess, must know what I am thinking
All the time.

Lady, when the moon dips like a pearly
Barge afloat upon a silver lake;
When the morn is manifestly early,
I am not infrequently awake.
When, as not infrequently, I'm lying
Waiting for a slumber overslow,
Whither, whither do my thoughts go flying?
Don't you know?

Weights and Measures

Later, when the rosy morn appearing
  Ushers in the glory of the day,
And the thought of eggs-and-bacon nearing
  Urges me to abdicate the hay;
Whiles that I'm apparelling and laving—
  Oh, but I am thoughtful as I dress—
What would be my major thought while shaving?
    Can't you guess?

Through the various daily occupations
  In which I am needfully immersed,
Which, of all my several cerebrations,
  Always is the uppermost and first?
And when day her weary course is ending,
  And I finish what I term my task,
Whither, whither do my thoughts go wending?
    Can you ask?

Lady, some may deem it far from proper,
  Say it is with Freudian meaning fraught,
Thus to tell you, for a paltry copper,
  What is my predominating thought.
Lady, can you bear it without shrinking?
  Did you want my "thoughts" the other night?
I was thinking—I am always thinking
    What to write.

The Village Munitions Co., Inc.

FORMERLY THE VILLAGE BLACKSMITH

UNDER a spreading chestnut tree
The smithy used to stand;
The smith, a prosperous man is he
As any in the land;
For many a shell in a foreign trench
Now bears the smithy's brand.

His clothes are new, and fashioned well;
His foods are rich and rare;
His hands are nicely manicured,
And freshly trimmed his hair.
And he slaps the whole world in the face,
For he is a millionaire.

Week in, week out, from morn till night,
And eke from night till day,
You can see his factory fires aglow—
(Three shifts at double pay).
None makes more profit than the smith
In all these U. S. A.

And people coming home from work
Look in at the open door,
And say, what time they see the fires,
And hear the bellows roar:
"I wish I'd bought some Blacksmith Common
When it was 24."

Weights and Measures

Toiling—rejoicing—profiting-
With pleasure evident,
Each morning sees some shells begun
For some belligerent.
Something attempted—some one done,
Has earned two thou. per cent.

The No-Longer-Merry Ancient Monarch

OLD King Cole was a merry old soul,
And a merry old soul was he,
Till he called for his pipe, and called for his bowl,
And called for his fiddlers three.

His pipe, that cost, in the days of old,
But a dollar seventy-four,
Now cost him twenty dollars in gold
On account of the well-known war.

His bowl—and though, in the olden time,
When bowls were cheap and good
At a cent apiece—now cost a dime,
On account of the dearth of wood.

And his fiddlers three who played so grand
For a dollar and a half a day,
Were known as The Ukulele Band
In a midnight cabaret.

Yes, Old King Cole was a merry old soul,
And a m. o. s. was he,
Till he called for his pipe, and called for his bowl,
And called for his fiddlers three.

To W. Hohenzollern: A Plea

TIME was, my William, when I had vivacity;
  Or ever came this sanguinary strife,
Mine was a crescent, widening capacity
  For what is not infrequently called Life.

Time was when every afternoon fair-weathery
  I might be found, from spring to early fall,
Observing hurlers chuck the spheroid leathery—
  In brief, I loved to watch a game of ball.

Senescent am I now, and full of youthlessness;
  And at your Hunnish head I cast the blame:
Since you established *schrecklichkeit*, or ruthlessness,
  I haven't gone to see a single game.

And since your savage, terrible portentousness
  Began to affright the celebrated world,
I've failed to feel a fraction of momentousness
  In how or in by whom the pill is hurled.

Sue then for peace! And let the skies be fair again!
  The Polo Grounds' most ardent, eager tenant
Was I. . . . And, William, how I yearn to care again
  About such things as who will win the pennant!

Air: "Captain Jinks"

I'M Captain Hans of the submarines,
I feed the sea with human be'n's;
I do not care about the means—
I'm in the German navy!

Music; and the Savage Breast

I'D read the Kaiser's note,
A message representative;
I went to bed unquieted
And fuming and fermentative.
Of submarine and boat,
Of wars in endless number
I dreamed until, while far from ill,
I simply could not slumber.

Of wars, I say, I dreamed,
Of contests gladiatorial.
When through the gray shone out the day—
The Day they call Memorial.
And still I lay and schemed,
Evolving plans piratic
A hundred million men to kill
In diction diplomatic.

"Alas!" I thought, "the end
Is come of all humanity!
The weeping earth abandons mirth
For frenzy and insanity.
Ah, whither does it tend? . . ."
—And then, in martial manner,
A German and adjacent band
Played "The Star Spangled Banner."

Music; and the Savage Breast

O little German band,
  Though partisan my attitude,
When all seemed vile you made me smile—
  Accept my grinning gratitude.
You made me understand,
  Where failed a thousand sermons,
That all has not yet gone to pot.
  . . . . I thank you, band of Germans.

The Indignant Captain of Industry

A GENTLEMAN I chance to know
An interesting thing of
Is victim of my verse, and so
That thing I seek to sing of.
(You surely will not censure me
For putting into poetree
An incident
About the gent-
Leman I seek to sing of.)

He was a gentleman in trade—
The firm was Smith & Brother.
They traffick-ed in lace and braid,
Or some such thing or other.
I am not certain if they sold
Cigars, or apple cake, or gold.
Pray let it stand
At laces, and
Some such affair or other.

"Observe a thousand girls make lace!"
Cried Smith, in exultation.
I saw them working in a place
Devoid of ventilation.
They seemed aweary, wan, and ill,
As merely human beings will
Appear who work
In sunless murk
Devoid of ventilation.

The Indignant Captain of Industry

I saw Smith yesterday, again,
Acerb, irate, indignant.
"I hate," he said, "those Prussian men,
With utter hate malignant.
To think of using poisonous gas
To kill an enemy! Alas!
I cannot see
How such men be!"
And, my! he was malignant!

The Patriotic Merchant Prince

I KNOW another gentleman, whose name I have forgotten;
His line of merchandise was wool—or maybe it was cotton.
I overheard his partner and himself at conversation
Regarding the emoluments of cloth adulteration.

"Now, larger dividends accrue from mixing wool with shoddy;
We have to stick 'em somehow. Ain't it done by everybody?
Besides," he argued clearly as a Mannie Kant magician,
"In business, you must do a lot to meet the competition."

That night I heard him make a speech—a sturdy and sincere one,
If it has ever been my pleasant privilege to hear one,
Replete with ringing words it was, and this is how it ended:
"The honor of the Stars and Stripes [Applause] must be defended."

Song: "Don't Tell Me What You Dreamt Last Night"

A DÉBUTANTE was sitting in the parlour of
her flat;
A brave young man upon her he was calling.
They talked about the weather and the war and
things like that,
As couples will, for conversation stalling.
The talk it all went merry quite until the young
man said:
"Last night I dreamed that you had gone
away——"
The débutante put up her hand and stopped the
young man dead,
And softly unto him these words did say:

CHORUS

"Don't tell me what you dreamt last night, I
must not hear you speak!
For it might bring a crimson blush unto my
maiden cheek.
If I were you, that subject is a thing that I'd
avoid—
Don't tell me what you dreamt last night, for
I've been reading Freud."

A loving husband sat one morn at breakfast with
his wife,
And said to her: "Oh, Minnie, pass the cream.
Last night I dreamed that Fritzi Scheff pursued
me with a knife,

And though I tried, I couldn't even scream."
His little wife put up her hand, and said: "Oh,
pray desist!
To tell the rest of it might break my heart.
That dream, I fear, is plain to any psycho-
analyst."
And then she softly wept, and said, in part:

CHORUS

"Don't tell me what you dreamt last night," etc.

The Seamy Side of Motley

LADY, when we sat together,
And your flow of talk that turned
On the Park, the Play, the Weather,
Left me frankly unconcerned,
I could see how hard you labour'd
Till your brain was stiff and sore,
Never having yet been neighbour'd
By so dull a bore.

Later on, from information
Gathered elsewhere after lunch,
You had got at my vocation,
Learned that I belonged to *Punch*.
And in tones of milk and honey
You invited me to speak
On the art of being funny,
Funny once a week.

'Tis a task that haunts me waking,
Like a vampire on the chest,
Spoils my peace, prevents my taking
Joyance in another's jest;
Makes me move abroad distracted,
Trailing speculative feet;
Makes me wear at home a racked head
In a dripping sheet.

Weights and Measures

Women hint that I am blinded
To their chaste, but obvious, charms;
Sportsmen deem me absent-minded
When addressed to feats of arms;
If the sudden partridge rises
I but rend the neighbouring air,
And the rabbit's rude surprises
Take me unaware.

Life for me's no game of skittles
As at first you might opine;
I have lost my love of victuals
And a pretty taste in wine;
When at lunch your talk was wasted,
Did you notice what occurred—
How I left the hock untasted,
How I passed the bird?

So, if you would grant a favour,
In your orisons recall
One whose smile could scarce be graver
If his mouth were full of gall;
Let your lips (that shame the ruby)
Pray for mine all wan and bleak
With the strain of trying to be
Funny every week.

—Owen Seaman, in "Salvage."

The Seamy Side of Motley

Lady, you have heard Sir Owen
  Seaman, editor of *Punch*.
You have read how he has no en-
  Thusiastic love of lunch;
Gone his disposition sunny,
  Vanishing his fair physique,
With the strain of being funny,
    Funny once a week.

Lady, if Sir Owen's ditty,
  Done in Seaman's able style,
Earns the bard your gracious pity,
  Gains your sympathetic smile;
If the load he labours under
  Urges you to tears; if he
Calls your cardiac nerve, I wonder
    How you'd feel for me.

"Once a week!" With what emotion,
  How jejunely I should jig
To my job—mine utter notion
  Of an *otium cum dig!*
Half a dozen days to wake up
  Unafraid of coming night!
Heedless of the woes of makeup,
    And the need to write!

Weights and Measures

Lady, I was once as others,
I was once the Party's Life;
Mingled freely with my brothers,
Went to places with my wife;
Life was radiant, life was rosy;
Now the world is dull and drab.
Gentle persons say: "He's prosy,"
Others: "He's a crab."

Woes too terrible to mention
Are an omnipresent curse;
Some one speaks—and my attention
Wanders to to-morrow's verse;
When I play at mixéd doubles—
It has happened countless times—
All my thoughts are on the troubles
Of to-morrow's rhymes.

So, my lady, wheresoever,
Whosoever you may be,
Don't you think you might endeavour
To devote a prayer to me?
Let your eyes (that brown or blue be)
Dim for me, already gray
With the strain of trying to be
Funny every day.

Summer Night, Riverside

IN THE wild soft summer darkness
How many a night we two together
Sat in the park and watched the Hudson
Wearing her lights like golden spangles
Glinting on black satin!
The rail along the curving pathway
Was low in a happy place to let us cross,
And down the hill a tree that dripped with bloom
Sheltered us
While your kisses and the flowers,
Falling, falling,
Tangled my hair.

The frail white stars moved slowly over the sky.

And now
Far off, far off,
The tree is tremulous again with bloom,
For June is here.

To-night what girl
When she goes home,
Dreamily, before her mirror, shakes from her hair
This year's blossoms clinging in its coils?
—Sara Teasdale, in *The Century*.

In the wild, hot summer subway
What time I journeyed home from work, O Sara,
I read your verses.

Weights and Measures

Free and fetterless as any barefoot girl in Arcady,
And I detrained at One Hundred and Sixteenth
Street
And walked
One block west, to Riverside Drive.
I sat upon a bench, avid for Adventure,
Athirst and overyearnful for Romance;
And a girl came along
And I thought of the blossoms clinging in the coils
of her hair,
And I said, "Good evening."

She said: "You fresh guys ought to be arrested
for mashing."

And so I sat there, senseful that Romance and
such
Were not for me.
All that paid attention to me were mosquitoes;
And I went home,
And, dreamily, before my mirror,
I anointed myself
With Oil of Citronella.

Voices

O THERE were many voices
Vying at the feast,
And through them I remember
Yours—you spoke the least.
—Witter Bynner in *McClure's*.

I hope that all the speakers
That I've heard in my time
Will get the subtle message
Of Mr. Bynner's rhyme.

What They Ask

ALWAYS they greet you and say,
"And what have you been *doing?*"

They do not ask
What you have thought,
How you wonder, naïvely grave,
In the rich silences of your soul;
Through what white flames you have passed,
Scathed clean, feeling your loves and your hates;
Nor of the dreams you have dreamed,
All purple and gold and the glory of gray cloud heights.

But they always ask
What you have done

And they know a thing or two.

FRANCES.

It's like this, Frances:
Time was when girls and I were well acquainted
And I would ask them:
"And what have you been thinking?
Through what candescent flames have you been passing?
And what—omitting their interpretation—have been your dreams?"

And they would tell me.

So now I say:
"And what have you been doing?"

Verses for a Guest Room

I HAVE no pomp to offer thee;
Just my heart's hospitality—
A little beam, but one to light
The lodging of an anchorite.

A slumber deep, a dreamless rest,
To thee within this room, dear guest!
'Tis sweet to me that thou and I
This night beneath one roof shall lie;
For this I deem most dear, my guest,
In all the world, or east or west,
Where'er thy tarrying may be,
Blessed is the roof that shelters thee!

—Anne Arrabin in *The Century.*

No pompous couch, no trappings grand,
Do I, a weary guest, demand.
Your hospitality of heart
Compels my gratitude, in part.

In part, because I find the guest
Gets hardly any dreamless rest;
The kitchen always is below
His room; at half-past five or so
He hears (pretending not to mind her)
Your Katie at the coffee-grinder;
Again he tries to sleep, but can't
Because the covers are too scant.

Weights and Measures

I know it's wrong, or north or south,
To look a gift room in the mouth;
But if it's all the same to you,
I'll take the 11:32.
Don't bother, please—to take me down—
I really must get back to town.

The Taxi

When I go away from you
The world beats dead
Like a slackened drum.
I call out for you against the jutted stars.
And shout into the ridges of the wind.
Streets coming fast,
One after the other,
Wedge you away from me,
And the lamps of the city prick my eyes
So that I can no longer see your face.
Why should I leave you,
To wound myself against the sharp edges of the night?

—Amy Lowell in *The Egoist.*

When I went away from you
The world beat dead
Like a banjo stringless.
Heard I you call against the stars,
And the rest of it.
But I had to go.
For I read the mounting meter of the cab and it appalled me,
Frightened me.
Any meter terrifies me, if you know what I mean.
There ought to be meterless cabs,
Just as
There is
Meterless verse.

Vorticist Poem on Love

LOVE is the great inspirer—"
I have read.
The day before yesterday
I could not write poems
Because I did not love.
And inarticulate,
To-day I cannot write
Because I am fallen out of love.
What's the use of love, anyway?

ARCHIE.

On Reading "Vorticist Poem on Love"

YET many poems have been written
Because the poet was unsmitten;
And many a sonnet has been fashioned
Because the bard was love-impassioned;
And many a lyric has been lyred
Because of loves that have expired.

Be passion dead, unborn, or hot,
Some people write and some do not.

The Double Standard

IMPORTANT is the nation's health.
Naught is the question of the shekel.
Ill fares the land that worships wealth!"
Says Editorial Dr. Jekyll.

"Do you get up with pains or cricks?
Do you have stitches in the side?
Buy Dr. Killman's Vit-E-Lix!"

Says Advertising Mr. Hyde

"Down with the greedy grafters who
The land's escutcheon do bespeckle!
Three cheers for the Red, White, and Blue!"
Says Editorial Dr. Jekyll.

"Does zero weather give you chills?
Insomnia leave you weary-eyed?
Buy Phakem's Phony Purple Pills!"

Says Advertising Mr. Hyde

"Better than gold an honest name."
"Be true, and let the envious heckle."
"Be fair, whoever wins the game,"
Says Editorial Dr. Jekyll.

"Lost Energy? Ambition? Calm?
GET DR. FIERCE'S GILDED GUIDE!"
REMEMEMBER BIDDY BUNKEM'S BALM!"

Says Advertising Mr. Hyde

If the Poets Had Feared the Advertisers

HEAR the sledges with the bells,
Bells fashioned of a well-known metal.

Up from the meadows rich with a prominent kind of grain,
Clear in the cool September morn.

* * * *

The clustered spires of a small Southern town stand,
Green walled by the hills of a famous state below Mason and Dixon's line.

* * * *

When as in a certain textile fabric my Julia goes,
Then, then, methinks how sweetly flows
The liquefaction of her feminine apparel.

The Ball Game

BY OUR OWN RUGGLES OF RED GAP

A YEAR come quarter-day it is that I have been in North America. I may be pardoned, I trust, if I say that in that brief period I have grown so accustomed to the manners and speech of our late colonists that I am able to endure them without the shocks that I experienced during my first fortnight in the New York city. Scores of strange customs, in dress and diction, which at first gave me a bit of a jolt, now contribute nothing to my astonishment. Inured I am to their eccentricities. I mean to say, I am almost quite a little Hepzibah to their stuff.

After luncheon, which consisted of a thick soup, a fairish chop, not too rare, and a plum tart, I brisked down to the Daily Morning New York City *Tribune* office, for a chat with Mr. Geoffrey-Parsons, an oldish josser, and one of their sub-editors. Dressed in a goodish lounge suit of tweeds he was, form-fitting but necessarily large, and with rather an air, save for his collar, which he allows to remain too wide apart at the middle, an effect which might be eliminated by drawing closer the cravat.

"Yes, Mr. Ruggles," he said. "What is the good word?"

It was a fair crumpler. Good words I had, and in abundance, for one's vocabulary is one's thought-apparel; and one should be plenteously and variously equipped. It is a matter I have

been sedulous about, always. I am, as one of their illustrated weeklies once said of me, at that particular point with the Noah Webster material.

Yet all of a heap I was when Mr. Geoffrey-Parsons asked me for the excellent word. His use of the definite article fair stunned me. Had he said "*a* good word," I should have been able to instance him an hundred, but the limitation nonplussed me. However, I had learned a habit of theirs—to answer one of their queries with another. Rude it is, like returning a letter unopened. It would never do with us. But I had to pay him out.

"Quite so, sir," I said. "How is every small thing?"

I rather had him there, for he elected to close the parley, leaving me a winner, with the last word.

"How would you like to go to the based-ball game," he asked me, "and do us a bit about it?"

"I should absobeastlylutely love it, old dearo," I replied, resolved to see it through like a dead sportsman. For although I was not without misgiving as to my knowledge of this game, never having seen a based-ball court even, yet I felt it would be an error to confess to a lack of knowledge or skill of anything whatsoever. The North Americans simply do not do it. They have tremendous confidence and assurance of their power to put things through, and, as they phrase it, they generally make off with it. I mean to say, I was

bound to have a go at it and not funk my fences.

Upon an air-tram I went, through what would have been our Bloomsbury, past their Wapping Old Stairs, which they call "Harlem." Beside a tarn, hard by a bit of a stream it was. "Polo Ground," they called it, and groomed and lawned it was in a way that would have done Wimbledon itself no discredit. Seats everywhere there were, but I was taken into the pressmen's cage, where the journalists were engaged in taking notes of the encounter, which was, I soon learned, between the Manhattans and the Brooklyns. These are but boroughs of the same city, yet these North Americans, with that drollery of exaggeration they so frequently employ, term these players the National League. Uncomic it is not, but it would never do with us.

As to the rules of the sport, I make no secret that I do not grasp them. The Manhattans, they tell me, trounced the Brooklyns by sixteen runs to three; yet the Brooklyns played nine innings to the Manhattans' eight. This, however, was the only thing in which it appeared that the Brooklyns excelled; and even in that department the discrepancy was slight.

Loud the exhortations were from the spectators. When Mr. Pfeffer, the Brooklyns' throwing fellow, appeared to be losing his skill, I heard all manner of discourteous remarks. Surely he must have heard some of them, for once I distinctly

observed him, when a chap cried, "Eject him. He is rotting," give the navvy a jolly good glare. But the counsel seemed sound, for Mr. Pfeffer was thereafter ejected, and a Mr. Schmutz, a stalwart looking North American, kindly did his throwing for him. Friendly assistance of this sort is common, I believe, one man frequently batting for another who may feel misgivings about his hitting-out prowess.

In the pressmen's cage were many young men, all discussing the sport. Jolly they were, though careless in their dress. Two only I saw who were vogue—Mr. Damon Runyon, who wore a blue-silk flowered shirt and cravat that blended, but-toned boots, a correct lounge suit, and a black bowler; and Mr. H. Bayard Swope, with an ut-terly decentish brown top coat. Also a Miss Leonard, who wore bronze slippers and brown spats—a bit of O. K., as the urchins say. She mattered enormously.

Back to the Daily Morning New York City *Tribune* office I came, with Mr. John Hines in his motor I went. It was top-hole, no end, riding along through what would be Piccadilly, and along the Embankment. I reëntered the sub-editor Parsons' room. Though it was quite evening, he was attired precisely as when I had seen him in the early afternoon! I made no comment, as I trust I know my place. But a lounge suit in the evening—it would never do with us.

"Shall you have any difficulty with your article, Mr. Ruggles?" he asked me.

"I fancy not," I answered. "I fancy it will be a clay pipe snapper."

Tipperary

I

By Our Own James Oppenheim

Far, far,
The lineally-measured distance from East Fourteenth Street, New York, to Tipperary,
Distant, distant the place and dreary-spent, drawn-out, the hours in journeying thither
To, of my entire man-found acquaintance, the most desirable, the most yearning-to-be-possessed, of women.
Piccadilly and Leicester Square, good-bye!
Far, far is it to Tipperary
But my sky-soaring soul, my myriad-hearted heart is there.

II

As the Translators Would Have Interlined It, If Horace Had Written It

O thou Torquatus, the space to Tipperarium is (many) thousand of paces, a wide distance in the travelling. The space to Tipperarium is (many) thousand of paces toward the propinquity to the most sweet virgin of whom knowledge is to me. Farewell, O (thou) Piccadillium! Farewell, O rectangle of (the consul) Lestertius! The space to Tipperarium is (many) thousand of paces, yet, moreover, my heart at that location is present.

III

As the Interlinears Might Take It from Xenophon

He spoke as follows: (that) it is ten parasangs to Tipherarikos, which is a great distance for the purpose of going; it is ten parasangs to Tipherarikos, also, moreover, in the direction of the girl to me than the honey of Hymettus more sweet, whom I know. Fare thee well, O Pikadillos! And thou, O Park (Paradise) of Leichester! It is ten parasangs to Tipherarikos, at which place exist the vitals of me.

IV

By Our Own A. E. Housman

A LASS in Tipperary
  Is miles and miles away,
But oh, the cherry blossom blooms
  Above her grave to-day!

The trip to Tipperary
  Is not for me to start;
For oh, the cherry blossom blooms
  Above my beating heart!

Weights and Measures

V

BY OUR OWN EUGENE FIELD

I've been on many a lengthy trip since that I was
a boy,
And some have filled my breast with pain and
some my soul with joy;
I've taken brief excursion trips and journeys
overlong,
And each of them I've made the theme of story
or of song.
I've been to California and I've been to New-
foundland;
I've shipped along the Danube and I've sailed the
Rio Grande;
But no trip I have taken yet is worthy to compare
With that to Tipperary, for

My
Heart's
Right
There.

I've been to Red Hoss Mountain, where the boys
was rough and true;
I've been to Colorado, where the summer skies is
blue;
To Boston, Mass., to Bangor, Maine, to Provi-
dence, R. I.,
To Baltimore, Schenectady, Los Angeles, and
Rye;

Tipperary

I've been to Tallahassee, Texarkana, Jacksonville;
To Springfield, O., and Springfield, Mo., and Springfields, Mass. and Ill.,
But, if I choose my pilgrimage, I much prefer to fare
Me forth to Tipperary, for

My
Heart's
Right
There.

The Piccadilly Ponies and the Leicester Square Sextette
Are powerless to draw my eye or make my heart forget.
No Persian princess on her throne, no dame of high degree,
No lady in her limousine can lure my love from me.
Let others by the blandishments of Broadway be beguiled,
I go to Tipperary, just to see a little child.
By-low and sleep, my prettikins, God bless your curly hair!
It's far to Tipperary, but

My
Heart's
Right
There.

"Jenny Kissed Me"

[There is Leigh Hunt's "Jenny Kissed Me," for example. Suppose he had made a short story of it!—ARTHUR GUITERMAN.]

Jenny kissed me when we met,
  Jumping from the chair she sat in;
Time, you thief, who love to get
  Sweets into your list, put that in!
Say I'm weary, say I'm sad,
  Say that health and wealth have missed me,
Say I'm growing old, but add
    Jenny kissed me.

—LEIGH HUNT.

BY OUR OWN ARNOLD BENNETT

WITH his right hand Edwin Clayhanger turned the glass knob of the front door—glass knobs had just been introduced in Bursley—opened the door, took a step over the slightly worn threshold, closed the door—not without effort, for it had warped a little, and had a habit of sticking at the top—and walked down the three white stone steps to the gate. The upper gate-hinge was minus a screw. It had been so for six months, and Edwin wondered whether he would speak again to Hilda about it. He speculated with himself; offered himself odds of nine to five that the hinge would be repaired before he returned from London. Grimly he thought of the advantages the layer of such a wager would have: the train might be wrecked and he might be killed, then he would not return, and technically he would win the bet.

Well, suppose he were killed. What then?

What had he that his meanest labourer had not? And his meanest labourer had the supreme advantage of latent romance, of potential adventure. Anything that might happen to Edwin Clayhanger's meanest labourer would be an amelioration, a splash of crimson on a drab life scheme. But to Edwin Clayhanger, a figure in the Five Towns, nothing could happen.

But things happened in other places. It was conceivable, for instance, that a Liverpool man might be going that morning to London to consult an oculist, as Edwin was; but it was inconceivable that the Liverpool trip would not be crowded with zestful and romantic incident. For nothing really happened in the Five Towns, or to Five Towns people. Take the matter of his marriage. He had been married six years and he did not understand his wife. He never knew precisely what she would do or say. Why were women like that? Were they like that? His sister Clara was not. You could tell what Clara was going to do that morning; and you knew what she would say next quarter-day at ten o'clock. There were no misgivings about a woman like Clara. But would he like that? He thought, with some distaste, too, he admitted, of the infrequent times when Hilda had done exactly what she thought she would do—or what anybody else would have done. And he was glad she was not as anybody else.

That was the trouble with him. He was ir-

resolute. He was convinced, as he passed through the gate into the street, that his marriage was a mistake; and as he turned into the road leading to the station he was certain that it was an exciting, delightful, and interesting adventure. He was sorry he had left without waking Hilda; but she had known that he was going to London —and she should have awakened. She had been awake early enough, he thought, with growing irritation, the morning she and her son George had gone to the London oculist's. Could she have been awake this morning? He wondered. It was possible. For she had not wanted him to go to London, he knew; and he was going more to prove his right to go—because she and George had gone—than because he had any desire to visit London, or, negatively, to leave the shop for a whole day.

He was ten minutes too soon. He bought a copy of *The Pilot* to read on the train. Passengers in increasing numbers gathered on the platform. Were they all going to London on some momentous quest? Not one of them but looked more important than Edwin felt that he appeared. "What contempt they would have for me," he thought, "if they knew I was going merely to ask an oculist about my sight! And what important missions they must have!"

He boarded the train and sat down. He took *The Pilot* from his pocket and tried to read. The page seemed to blur.

He thought:

"They oughtn't to print so much stuff in solid six-point. It's too hard to read. They ought to lead it. I can't read it at all. And if I can't——"

But did that follow? It struck him with sudden horror that he was going to London to consult an oculist. Perhaps type was clear and legible. Undoubtedly his eyes were failing. He was forty-two. Men had gone blind at thirty, he supposed. It was possible. At any rate, he would have to wear glasses, and what would Hilda think of that? She had said, he remembered, that she loved the look in his eyes, and while he recalled having looked at himself in the mirror the night she told him, and having found nothing unusual about his eyes, yet he was distinctly depressed at the prospect of lessening any of his good physical points. He thought of his diminished efficiency at the shop, in the event of blindness, but that idea disturbed him not nearly so much as that of the effect upon Hilda. By this time she would be up, he fancied. Would she worry that he had gone, as he had said last night he would do? Well, she might as well learn that Edwin Clayhanger was a man whose word, apparently lightly given, was as binding as any contract Fearns himself could have drawn. Still, he would telegraph in the evening.

II

He walked slowly from the London station into the crowd. Not one of them but seemed younger than he.

He thought:

"I'm forty-two. Lots of men have died at ages younger than that. I might die to-day and nobody would say, 'What a young man!'" Weariness of soul and limb surged over him; perspiration came out on his palms.

III

He ascended the stairs leading to Dr. Carpington's office. They were laid with linoleum. The sign on the door said "DR. ANTHONY CARPINGTON, OCULIST AND OPTOMETRIST, ENTRANCE." He noted that he had no difficulty in deciphering the characters; printed, he thought, with the professional approval of the type expert, in 80-point Gothic expanded. An oculist who knew enough to have a sign as well printed as that would be a man to be trusted. If he should tell Edwin his sight was perfect, Edwin would believe him; if he should condemn him——

He opened the door and entered a small waiting room. At a small desk was seated a young woman. Edwin noted her yellow hair and her pink and white complexion. She wore patent leather shoes, a green velvet skirt, and a white

silk waist. She was slight, but all her clothes seemed just a trifle too tight. It was attractive, though, thought Edwin; scarcely moral. It would never do in the Five Towns.

As Edwin entered, the young woman turned her head. She looked at Edwin for an instant, smiled: and, jumping from the chair she sat in, threw both arms about him and kissed him twice—the second time the kiss was of appreciable duration —upon the lips.

"I'm Jenny," she cried.

IV

Edwin Clayhanger was riding back to Bursley on the noon train. "What rot!" he thought, with a smile. "A man of my years to worry about his eyes. Or anything. Twenty-four hours in a day! And hundreds of days in a year! And the indefinite number of years I have yet to live!"

He hurried from the station to his house, full of romantic possibilities, and the savour of existence thrilled him throughout.

Weights and Measures

BY OUR OWN TOM DALY

Signor, I gattin' old an' gray,
But—Rosa keess me yestiday.

Joos' yestiday, w'en I am stan'
Right here by my peanutta stan',
A granda lady, beeg an' fine,
Weeth leeps joos' like Eetalia's wine,
Ees com' in soocha fina car
An' ask how mooch peanuttas are.
Her hair so black, her han' so small
I say, "You notta pay at all."
An' she ees joomp from off da seat,
An' keessa me—oh, my, so sweet!
Not like da kees from child or wife,
But deeferent, you bat my life!

Signor, I gattin' old an' gray,
But—Rosa keess me yestiday!

Dove River Anthology

By Our Own William Wordsworth

LUCY GRAY

SHE dwelt among the untrodden ways
Near Dove Springs Junction;
A girl whom nobody ever praised,
A maiden whose lovers were few.
A dandelion by a mossy boulder,
Fair as a solitary shining star,
She lived unknown.
Few were informed of her death.
But it made a difference to some.
Eh, William Wordsworth?

A Rhymed Review

"THE LAUGHING MUSE"

(*By Arthur Guiterman. Harper & Brothers*)

AN OBVIOUS thing for one to do
For one who runs this kind of colyum
Is to attempt a Rhymed Review
Of Arthur Guiterman's new volume.

("The Laughing Muse." One Dollar, net)
A better bargain readers could not
In all their days of seeking get—
Though maybe I say so that should not.

(Observe that stanza. How it creaks
With rhymes and verbiage extraneous!
Friend Arthur would have worked for weeks
To make that stanza seem spontaneous.)

For him no fault of limping line,
No flaws in joining or connection;
I rate his verse ahead of mine,
Which is to hail it as perfection.

If you don't know his lyric stuff,
I beg of you to blow a dollar;
To you who know I've said enough—
I needn't emphasize my holler.

P. S. The book is large and fine.
("The Laughing Muse," by Arthur Guiterman) and contains that deathless line,
"I hope to God a lion bit her."

That General Utility Rag

BY OUR OWN IRVING BERLIN

I LIKE to hear—yes, yes!—I like to hear
The music of a big brass band.
I love the tone
Of the slide trombone [*Bus. of slide trombone*]
And the saxophone [*Bus. of saxophone*]
So grand.
But I want to be
General utility—
I want to try
That baby-cry [*Bus. of baby-cry*];
Want to play the rattle [*Bus. of rattle*] and the castanet [*Bus. of castanet*];
Want to bang the tom-tom [*Bus. of tom-tom*] and the tambourette [*Bus. of tambourette*];
Want to jangle
That old triangle [*Bus. of triangle*];
Cut a caper
With the old sandpaper [*Bus. of sandpaper*];
Ring those sleighbells [*Bus. of sleighbells*] and those chimes [*Bus. of chimes*]
And crack that whip [*Bus. of whip*] about a million times.
I want to beat that thunder-sheet [*Bus. of thunder-sheet*]
I like the smash of the old glass-crash [*Bus. of glass-crash*]
I want to go on—yes, go on—
I want to go on—yes, go on—
I want to go on a musical jag!

That General Utility Rag

I want to have a symphonical souse
Like a syncopated [*Bus. of syncope*] Richard
Strauss.
I want to play—hooray!—
All day—hooray!—
With facility
And agility
That General Utility
Ra-a-a-g!

Ode to Work

AFTER CALVERLEY'S "ODE TO TOBACCO"

THOU, who when joys appear
Bidst them begone, and mere
Pleasure, delight, or cheer,
Scorning regardest;
Hard, when the morn is gray;
Hard, when they've cleared away
Lunch; and at close of day
Possibly hardest:

I have a hatred old
For thee, though manifold
Stories, I know, are told,
All to thy credit;
How they who love to slave,
Avid of work, and brave,
Fill a not early grave,
(Gosh! how I dread it!)

How they who love to shirk
Duties that chafe and irk,
Loathing all kinds of work,
Reft of ambitions,
Urgeless and uninspired,
Sodden and dull and tired,
Ultimately get fired,—
Lose their positions.

Ode to Work

Often a friend when he
Greets me will say to me:
"Oh, how you gleefully
    Jingle and jest it!"
Friend, if you care for my
Shameless expression, why,
Let me be honest: I
    Simply detest it.

Work, I have heard it claimed,
Makes one beloved and famed;
Haply I shall be blamed
    Now if I slack it.
Blame me, then . . . I don't care
One little tinker's swear.
Me for the open air—
    Give me my racquet!

STRANGE CASES

The Case of Edgar Abbott and Philip Ridd

THERE was Edgar Alvin Abbott, who had.
never learned to swim;
All the science of natation was unconnable to him.
All his efforts went for nothing, and his comrades'
japes and jeers
Were his portion every summer of his forty-seven
years.

Patiently he bore the mockeries of the swimmers
on the beach,
But the useful art of swimming ever stayed be-
yond his reach;
And whenever one would ask him, with a wish to
scoff and mock,
"Do you swim?" he'd always answer, "Sure, I
swim just like a rock."

Philip Albert Aloysius Ebenezer Cabot Ridd
Started out to be a swimmer when he was a little
kid—
("Kid" is not a word I worship, but the lapse is
rather slight.
If such usages offend you, do not read the things I
write).

Weights and Measures

Philip Ridd could do the paddle and the trudgeon
and the crawl;
He could float and do a jacknife—he was master
of them all.
He had strength, he had endurance, he had speed-
iness of stroke;
And he always thought of Edgar Alvin Abbott as
a joke.

Once, as Philip Ridd and Edgar Abbott stood upon
the shore,
They observed a maiden swimming out a hundred
yards or more;
And they saw the waves were angry and in-
ordinately high,
And they saw the maiden struggle, and they
heard the maiden cry.

Braver hearts than Philip Ridd's and Edgar
Abbott's might have quailed;
Braver souls than Phil's or Eddie's in that crisis
might have failed.
"Save me! Save me!" cried the maiden, and our
hero Philip Ridd,
Leaping bravely to her rescue, cried: "I'll save
you!" And he did.

A Consistent Girl

MISS Dorothea Birmingham Irene Amanda Jones
Was one to tell about her plans in no uncertain tones.
She never staked a nickel on the fickle wheel of chance,
But reckoned all her sayings and her doings in advance.

In January Dorothea knew that in July
She'd go to such-and-such a place, with whom she'd go, and why;
She knew what minute she would rise and when she'd go to bed.
And what she'd have for dinner six or seven years ahead.

No purposes or plans so firm as were Miss Dorothea's.
Her parents used to say to her: "Oh, Dot, you have ideas!"
But argument of any sort would never alter Dot,
Or budge her one scintilla, bit, iota, tittle, jot.

Among the plans immutable that filled her pretty head
Was that concerning whom she would and whom she wouldn't wed;

Weights and Measures

Her future mate must be a man of uttermost perfection,
Whose character and pedigree would bear minute inspection.

"The man that I select," she'd say, "the husband of my choice,
Must have a giant stature and a sweet, sonorous voice;
A noble heart, a mammoth mind, a mass of curly hair,
A prétty wit—and also he must be a millionaire."

Now Padonaram Perkins was the silliest of plumbers;
His weak and astigmatic eyes had squinted sixty summers;
The chill of sixty winters used to creak and crack his bones;
But once he met upon the street Miss Dorothea Jones.

"O lady," Padonaram cried, "whoever you may be,
I'm asking you, right here and now, if you will marry me.
O lady, will you marry me? I beg, beseech and hope!"
And, Dorothea, queenly and consistent, answered "Nope."

The Case of Albert Irving Williamson

NOW, Albert Irving Williamson was innocent and young;
Nor evil thought was in his mind, nor word upon his tongue.
He drank no alcoholic brews, he smoked no nicotine;
He was about as good a youth as I have ever seen.

But alcohol and nicotine, injurious though they be,
Are utterly irrelevant to Albert's historee.
Still, if I choose to mention things that are irrelevant,
Pray, who are you to censure me or tell me that I can't?

He was, I say, a blameless youth who shunned the sinful deeps;
He never played at marbles with the other boys for keeps;
He never played a gambling game of any kind or sort—
Young Albert Irving Williamson was not at all a sport.

Now Albert chanced to ride upon a Pullman palace smoker
Whose occupants, a rough and vulgar crowd, were playing poker.

"Ah, ha!" then whispered one of them as Albert
came in sight,
"Leave us go after this here boob and trim the
sucker right."

(I do not hold with talk like that, but it is not this
bard's.
It is the verbiage used by such as like to play at
cards.)
"Oh, please to play a bit with us," up spake those
gambling men,
"Sit in with us till Utica—we're due at seven-
ten."

So Albert Irving Williamson, who knew no single
rule
Of poker, played with men who thought that
Albert was a fool—
Our Albert Irving Williamson, to whose untutored
mind
The nine of straights was just as good as seven of
a kind.

Oh, pride it is a parlous thing, and comes before a
fall!
The gamblers went for Albert's roll until they got
it all.
In spite of Albert's ignorance, of which there was a
lot,
Our hero did not win a single solitary pot.

The Case of Domineering John Alexis Upham

WHEN John Alexis Upham was a little lad of two,
He made his nurse do everything he wanted her to do;
A domineering darling, an imperious little lad,
His parents thought him lordly, but the neighbours called him bad.

He ruled the other boys at school; in classroom and at play
Our John Alexis Upham always had to have his way.
At college (on the campus they discuss his manners still),
Nor student nor professor ever dared to cross his will.

As energetic business man he took a stubborn stand,
And not a clerk or merchant prince would counter his command.
Resistance to his orders never came from any one;
Did he say "Go and do it thus," why, thus 'twas always done.

But John Alexis fell in love—such incidents occur—
And everybody said, "Poor Nell! Alas, I pity her!"
A modest, unassuming maid, and so distinctly shy
That if you said a word to her she'd look at you and cry.

They married—John Alexis, who had always had his way—
And Nell, who never, never, never had a word to say;
And in their long connubial life—on thirty years it borders—
She always did, she always does exactly as he orders.

The Case of Sabrina Simpson Usch

I'M about to tell the story of Sabrina Simpson Usch,
Hearing which the strictest infant wouldn't even have to blush;
For I always make my stories just as moral as I can—
If you must have Mr. Chambers, read *The Cosmopolitan.*

All her life Sabrina Simpson (she is only twenty-one)
Had been sheltered from the figurative rain and frost and sun.
As a student she was slothful, and her intellect was small,
Why, the veriest freshman used to say she had no bean at all.

Well, Sabrina married Edgar Allen Kuppenberger Usch;
He was invalid and wealthy, and was cut down in the flush;
And he left his bride, uncalloused to the bludgeonings of Fate,
Seven hundred thousand dollars ~~and a lot of real estate.~~

Then the gossips got together and they said she had no chance—
She without the slightest grasp of any problem of finance!
What would happen to that money if Sabrina had her way,
Those who knew her lack of reason did not hesitate to say.

When Sabrina heard the prodigal provisions of the will,
She had something of a tremour, which was followed by a chill,
And she said, "For me to worry is a curious thing and new,
But I haven't any business sense, and don't know what to do."

So she spent the splendid fortune and she sold the real estate,
And she hasn't seven dollars at the sadly present date.
Poor Sabrina, unendowed with any great intelligence!
Poor Sabrina, who they said had not a bit of business sense!

A Parfit, Gentil Knight

YESTEREVENING'S shades descending
On—you've guessed it—yesterday
Found me, as the bard says, wending
Home my way.

In the subway, squeezed and tightsome,
(This is not to be a rhyme
Of the subway. That I'll write some
Other time.)

In the subway (O my brothers,
What a subject for a pome!)
I was—with a lot of others—
Going home.

And a lady stood beside me
Fair as any I have seen.
She was—yes, whate'er betide me!—
Quelque queen.

Fair as lady ever sought of
Knight of a forgotten year.
(I immediately thought of
Guinevere.)

Fain for her would I demand some
Boon . . . And underneath her strap
Sat a knightly and a handsome-
Looking chap.

Weights and Measures

Sturdy, brave, and true—the kind of
Man who'd fight, and falter not.
(Straightway he put me in mind of
Launcelot.)

"Now," methought (my thoughts are tender
And as maple sugar sweet),
"To the lady he'll surrender
Up his seat."

But he read along unheeding,
Giving Guinevere no look;
And he kept intently reading
In his book.

And I looked, the title-page of
That there volume for to see.
. . . . .
It was Bulfinch's "The Age of
Chivalry."

American Themes for a Gilbert

SIR WILLIAM GILBERT, master of the
lightsome and the lyrical.
Employed a sharply pointed pen and eke a style
satirical;
A pen and style that here and now are absolutely
needed—
Alas! that no one lives to write the kind of things
that he did!

"Yet should a Gilbert rise again, with such a gift
for gayety,
For academic merriment applauded by the laity,
Where are the targets now for his satirical con-
fetti?
What themes," you ask, "are worthy of Gilber-
tian libretti?"

"What could he find to write of in these U. S. of
Ameriky?
What is there for a pen so sharply, subtly esoter-
icky?"
Alas! there are a thousand themes, you undis-
cerning filbert,
To furnish inspiration to a man like William
Gilbert!

Weights and Measures

An opera, say, replete with quip and crank and
quirk and quiddity
On presidential calmness and Woodrovian placid-
ity;
On Secretary Daniels and the varied consequences
Attendant on the dearth of ships and similar
defences.

On Taste in Music, Letters, Art; on War, and on
Neutrality;
On men and women, rich and poor, in this and
that locality;
And then— this is the Big Idea, and I shall now
unloose it—
An opera on the Task of Finding Some One to
Produce It.

Lines Written in a City Composing-Room

WHEN Thomas Gray, the famous bard,
Wrote that which made him noted,
He worked egregiously hard
On lines that might be quoted.
For seven years, through woes and ills,
His Muse was exercising;
But
Who paid the meat and grocery bills
While Gray was elegizing?

"No slipshod verses shall be mine,"
He'd tell the impatient printer.
"I'll write it out upon this line
If it consumes all winter!"
And so he wooed the elusive Muse
With zeal uncompromising—
But
Who kept the little Grays in shoes
While Gray was elegizing?

We modern minnesingers waste
No time, no midnight taper;
Our lines are done in fevered haste
To catch the waiting paper.
We rush the rhymes we write to-day
Our guerdon overprizing—
Still—
Who paid the rent for Mrs. Gray
While Gray was elegizing?

Alas!

I CANNOT write the old jokes,
The cranks and wanton wiles,
Because I can't remember 'em,
And I haven't got the files.

LINES INSPIRED BY TRYING TO IMAGINE WHAT A MAGAZINE ART EDITOR ORDERING A COVER TELLS MR. CLARENCE F. UNDERWOOD

PICTURE the lady's stocking;
Be sure you don't forget
The dear little dimpled darling
Displaying her toes et cet.

Hudson River Anthology

BENJAMIN J. WHOOZISS

I RAN a store;
I underpaid my help
And lied about the goods I sold;
Lied in advertisements in the newspapers.
Then the war came.
It hurt my business,
And so the things the papers said
Hurt my investments.
True things they were, those journalistic utterances,
And bravely said.
But I wrote solemn letters to the papers,
Signing various names;
"All I want is Fair Play," they said.
O. Henry could have made a yarn of that, I think.

JANITOR CARL CARLSEN

I WAS a petty grafter
But given so to whining
The tenants in the apartment house
All pitied me a lot.
An inefficient janitor
Entitled "superintendent";
I was a shadow boxer,
And the landlord thought I worked.
Commissions from the butcher,
Commissions from the newsman,
Commissions from the grocer,

Weights and Measures

Amounted up, in a year.
One day, in greed for grafting,
I tried to make the milkman
Give me a larger percentage—
He tried to shoot me dead.
The bullet grazed my shoulder—
The milkman was convicted.
He's serving thirty years.

"Chacun à Son Goût"

AD MAECENATEM

Horace: Book I, Ode 1

"Maecenas atavis, edite regibus."

MAECENAS of the bluest blood,
My guard revered, my glory noble,
One man acquires Olympic mud
Upon his racing automob'le,
And winning of an earthly prize
Exalts him to the well-known skies.

Another finds applause is sweet—
The praise of Rome, as loud as fickle;
Another takes his joy in wheat,
In watching it from seed to sickle;
And in his granary he stores
Sweepings from Libyan threshing-floors.

The man who loves to plough the field
Has no desire to plough the ocean;
His farm delights he will not yield
To sailor joys. Perish the notion!
The trader trembles at the gale,
Yet, once on land, longs to set sail.

Weights and Measures

One there may be that doth recline
  Flushing his arid pipe thoracic
With beakers—ay, with bowls!—of wine;
  The brand? The best domestic Massic.
Recline, as I began to say,
Beneath a tree for half a day.

Some love the wars that mothers fear,
  The toot of trump, the blare of bugle;
Some like to hunt the boar or deer,
  Unmindful of the ties con*ju*gal.
For me nor hunts nor war's alarms;
For me nor motorcars nor farms.

Ivy for me! The grove for mine!
  Where nymphs and satyrs hold high revel,
Where I can join the gods divine,
  A bit above the lowbrow level.
And if you say: "Some bard, this guy!"
My soaring head shall touch the sky.

The Softness of Sybaris

AD LYDIAM

Horace: Book I, Ode 9

"Lydia, dic, per omnes—"

LYDIA, by the gods above,
Tell me why you aim your love
At a lad whose life was centred
In the tournaments he entered.

Now he never rides a horse;
Never goes around the course,
Never swims the Tiber River—
At athletics he's a flivver.

Once the discus he would throw;
Quoits he played; and, long ago,
Cobb was not a better batter.
. . . Tell me, Lydia, what's the matter?

The Cold Wave of 32 B.C.

AD THALIARCHUM

Horace: Book I, Ode 9

"Vides, ut alta stet nive candidum"—

It is cold, O Thaliarchus, and Soracte's crest is white;
There is skating on the Tiber; there is No Relief in Sight.
Tell the janitor the radiator's absolutely cold. . .
Let us crack a quart of Sabine; I've a case of four-year old.

Here's to Folly, Thaliarchus! Here is "Banzai!", "Pros't!", and "How!"
We should fret about the future! We should corrugate the brow!
Any joy is so much velvet; Age impinges soon enough.
Why resolve to can the frivol? Why decide to chop the fluff?

On the well-known Campus Martius, as the shade of night descends,
There are ladies castlewalking with their unplatonic friends;
Many a sweetly smiling damsel—need I fill up further space?
Hurry, O my Thaliarchus, let us go that to there place.

To the Ship of State

AD REMPUBLICAM

Horace: Book I, Ode 14

"O navis, referent in mare te novi—"

BEWARE, O bark, the waves that wish to
tear thee from these shores;
And bravely seek the harbor, for thy sides are
reft of oars;
See how thy broken mast and yards are groaning
in the gale!
Unsound, alas! thy ropeless hull! Unsafe thy
shredded sail!

Thou hast no gods to call upon when Sable Care
is thine;
The sailor trusts no showy sterns, though built of
Pontic pine.
O ship that wert my woe, that art my love, avoid
the seas
And shun the treacherous waters of the shining
Cyclades.

On the Indestructibility of Reading Matter

(To Carolyn Wells)

Horace: Book I, Ode 22

"Integer vitae, scelerisque purus—"

A LAD whose life is pure and clean—
His stuff is cosmic, sempiternal;
Whether in *Harper's Magazine*
Or in the so-called *Evening Journal.*

He needs no 24-point blurb,
His verse requires no Gothic 10-point,
For folks to say, "Believe me, Herb,
Some ooze comes off of *that* guy's pen point!"

I wrote some poetry at home—
I lived, you know, at Sabine Junction—
A wolf came up and glimpsed my pome,
And slammed the door with vulpine unction.

A big, big, big, big wolf was he:
(And if you crave corroboration,
Look up Ode 22 and see
The difficulties of translation.)

On the Indestructibility of Reading Matter

Lived I where Kipling pens his rhymes,
  Or where Le Gallienne pens his stanzas;
And worked I for the London *Times*,
  Or for a sheet in Howell, Kansas—

Oh, ship me to some desert isle
  Or leave me in my Conning Tower,
Still shall I sing my Carrie's smile
  And love its cardiac motive power.

To Chloë

I

Horace: Book I, Ode 23

"Vitas hinnuleo me similis, Chloë—"

CHLOË, regard my song sententious
And trust me as your soul's director:
No longer be a conscientious
Objector.

No lion, I, to feast upon
You, Chloë. Do not be so distant.
Forget your mother. Be a non-
Resistant.

II

FEAR me not, my Chloë, like a fawn that seeks its mother,
Frightened of the forest, overfearful of the trees,
Tremulous with terror it is difficult to smother,
Quivering at the rustle of the brier in the breeze.

Never mine the cruel wish to crush you like a lion,
Never mine the wish to be a tiger in a rage.
Cut away from mother! Give your bridal-gown a try on!
Votes for women, Chloë! And remember, you're of age.

To His Lyre

AD LYRAM

Horace: Book I, Ode 32

"Poscimur. Si quid vacui sub umbra—"

IF EVER, as I struck thy strings,
I've sounded one enduring note,
Let me, O Lyre, think up some things
That folks will simply have to quote.

A Lesbian lyrist owned thee once;
He used to sing a lot, he did,
Of dames and demijohns and stunts
Like that. He was the Tuneful Kid.

Help me, mine ancient ukulele,
Sing songs of sorrow and of joy,
Such as, composed and printed daily,
Will make the public yell, "Oh, *boy!*"

"Persicos Odi"

I

Horace: Book I, Ode 38

"Persicos odi, puer apparatus—"

OH, BOY!—to quote a slangy line—
This war-stock thing is wrong.
No Persian Copper shares for mine—
They cramp a poet's song.

The market I shall never dent
With International Tree.
I'll take my little four per cent.—
The savings bank for me.

II

FOR me no high-powered touring car, no lacquered limousine;
No Persian carburetor, and no perfumed gasolene;
As my chauffeur I know you hate unneceessary fuss—
A little flivver runabout is good enough for us.

Playing It Safe

AD LICINIUM

Horace: Book II, Ode 10

"Rectius vives, Licini, neque altum—"

SAIL not too far to be safe, O Licinius!
Neither too close to the shore should you steer
Rashness is foolish, and how ignominious
Cowardly fear!

He who possesses nor palace nor hovel
(My little flat would be half way between)
Hasn't a house at which paupers must grovel
Yet it is clean.

Shaken by winds is the pine that is tallest;
Ever the summit is bared to the flash;
The bigger thou art, so the harder thou fallest—
Cracketty crash!

He who in famine can hope for the manna,
He who in plenty fears poverty's chafe—
He is the proper, the true Pollyanna,
Playing it safe.

Weights and Measures

Jupiter, bringing the bleak, bitter, raw gust
  Also remembers to take it away;
He is the god of December . . . but August—
    April . . . but May

When you have creditors suing to pay them
  Four-to-an-ace is the way to invest;
But when you win every pot, you should play them
    Close to your chest.

As the New Year [18 B.C.] Dawned

AD POSTUMUM

Horace: Book II, Ode 14

"Eheu! fugaces, Postume, Postume—"

O POSTUMUS, alas! I hear the bells go tinkle-tinkle!
Zip! goes another flitting year! here comes another wrinkle!
And though I hate to hang the crape—no skill and no endurance
Can keep your folks from putting in a claim for your insurance.

If daily you endow a school and forty-two Foundations
Would that put off a single day your last disintegrations?
No! What though you be prince or prune, a slacker or a hero,
The sum of all your wealth and woes is ultimately zero.

Some day you'll bid your wife good-bye, and—this no prognosis—
That afternoon they'll say it was arterio-sclerosis;
And in a year, or maybe less, a man of greater merit
Shall spill upon your marble floors the wine he will inherit.

The Good Old Days of 27 B.C.

AD ROMANOS

Horace: Book III, Ode 6

"Delicta maiorum immeritas lues—"

FOR sins ancestral, O thou guiltless Roman,
thou shalt suffer
Till thou restore the temples that are crumbling, and the shrines;
The statues that are smoky go and polish with a buffer!
Go scour the sooty sculpture till it shines!

It is by service to the gods alone that thou prevailest;
With them beginneth everything; to them entrust the end!
Observe what woes to Italy, once the heartiest and the halest,
The gods have sent—continue still to send.

Monaeses and the Pacoran have beaten us in battle—
To them the spoil of Rome upon their necklaces is sweet—
And worried now with politics and civil tittle-tattle,
We fear the foreign soldiery and fleet.

The Good Old Days of 27 B.C.

Our times are overtroublous; there are scandals
and divorces;
We tremble for the children and we fret about
the Home;
The River of Disaster, overflowing from these
sources,
Is threatening the government of Rome.

The Roman flapper joys in doing wild, Hellenic
dances,
She calsomines her features and she rouges up
her lips;
The married woman yearns for unconnubial
romances—
She's naughty to her tender finger-tips.

Not such the sires of Roman youth, who rising
in their glory,
Put Hannibal, Antiochus, and Pyrrhus off the
map.
Gone are the peasant warriors and their brave,
bucolic story!
Return again, O simple Sabine yap!

O Time, is naught secure from thy malign disinte-
gration?
Our parents' days our grandsires and our
granddams used to curse.
Compare us with our parents—ponder our de-
generation!
And gosh! our kids are getting even worse!

An Invitation to a Drinkfest

AD TELEPHUM

Horace: Book III, Ode 19

"Quantum distet ab Inacho—"

YOU tell when Inachus was born;
You say when Codrus was a boy;
Of Æacus you sing, nor scorn
To tell about the wars of Troy.

But what's the cost of Chian wine?
Who'll heat the water for my dip?
Under whose roof do I recline?
When shall I lose this case of grippe?

A drink! Three *cyathi* (or nine)!
Hurry, my boy, and bring it soon!
We'll toast (I like the following line)
Murena, midnight, and the moon.

To revel now is my desire;
I'll take my joyance in a jag.
Why mute the pipe and hush the lyre?
Come, play that Berecyntian Rag!

I hate the hands that hang the crape!
For me the souls that hang expense!
Fling flowers around! Uncork the grape,
And laugh at Lycus's laments!

An Invitation to a Drinkfest

To you the radiant Rhode turns;
(Your hair has witched that lovely gell)
My lingering love for Glycera burns—
My Glycera . . . You know me, Tel.

When Q. H. F. Sang "Good by, Girls"

AD VENEREM

Horace: Book III, Ode 26

"Vixi puellis nuper idoneus—"

I USED to be one who was frantic for fun;
Than I there was no one insaner.
I used to be keen for a call on a queen. . . .
A hardy campaigner.

No more shall I fall! I shall hang on this wall
My lute and my weapons of warfare;
To Venus I bow as these offerings I vow.
Is anything more fair?

O goddess, one favour I seek as I pray—
No boon ostentatious or showy—
Just once, for my sake, O I beg of thee, take
A wallop at Chloë.

On the Ephemeralness of Beauty

Horace: Book IV, Ode 10

"O crudelis adhuc et Veneris muneribus potens—"

O CRUEL thou, while yet the best
Is thine of Beauty's fair bequest,
When that thy pride shall have a fall,
Thy locks decrease to none at all;
When pale hath grown thy rosy cheek,
And dull become thy glance, and weak—
Whene'er thou gazest in the glass,
Then shalt thou, sighing, say: "Alas!
Why, when my heart was young and gay
Lacked I the wisdom of to-day?
Or, now that faltering is my step,
Why have I lost my pristine pep?"

The Bard's Excuse

AD MAECENATEM

Horace: Epode XIV

"Mollis inertia cur tantam diffuderit imis—"

MAECENAS, you wonder what spell I am under
And why I continue to stall;
You cannot help thinking that I have been drinking—
I haven't at all.

My verses are thinnish? I simply can't finish
The creaking iambics I start . . .
The god's interference has caused my arrear-
ance—
(The god of the heart.)

Bathyllus of Samos excited the famous
Anacreon, maker of rhymes;
Why, you took a trip in your car with a pippin
A couple of times.

And so my cessation from versification,
For Phyrne's the girl I adore.
(In which I have plenty of company—twenty
Or twenty-one more).

To Furius, on Poverty

Catullus: Ode 23

"Furi, quoi neque servus est, neque arca—"

FINANCIAL troubles irk thee not;
No servants test thy strong endurance;
No germs infest thy simple cot;
Thou hast no need for fire insurance.

How happy, Furius, is thy life
Shared with thine estimable Popper
And his—excuse me—wooden wife!
(I think those birds could lunch on copper!)

In utter health how happy thou,
Fearing nor fire nor indigestion!
No fall in stocks can blanch thy brow
Serene beyond all doubt or question.

Hay fever, rheumatiz, the grip,
Malaria, gout, and such diseases
Elude thy frugal guardianship—
Both when it's hot and when it freezes.

Cease then to pray the gods for wealth
Not worth the pains to have amassed it!
I wonder if, with naught but health
Thou knowest just how soft thou hast it?

Farewell to Cynthia

Propertius: Book I, Elegy 8

"Tune igitur demens, nec tea me cura moratur?"

ARE you bewitched? Or don't you care
To stay where I may linger near ye?
Am I less welcome than the air
Of chill Illyria?

O Cynthia, are you then so keen
For him* that you prefer the slow life
Of shipboard? (*You know whom I mean—
The lying lowlife!)

Can you endure the wintry snows,
The ship's hard couch, and kindred trouble?
I'd like to have each storm that blows
In fury double!

For then you'd have to stay, my pet;
No ship could loose the straining tether.
Yet—if you go, I hope you'll get
Some dreadful weather.

I shall be standing at the pier,
The gentle author of these verses,
Shaking my fists at you, my dear,
And cussing curses.

Farewell to Cynthia

Yet, most perfidious, most untrue,
  You coyest of this flirty, coy age,
I hope you'll have—I truly do—
    A lovely voyage.

And I shall ask of every tar
  Where any one has seen or met you;
North, East—I don't care where you are—
    Some day I'll get you!

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The Nuances of Mendacity

NO MASTER in mendaciousness, no keen deceiver I;
I never know when any one is telling me a lie;
The clumsiest of untruthful men I never can suspect,
And flaws in simple honesty are things I don't detect.

When someone says: "I'll pay it back in just a day or two."
I never get the notion it's a thing he will not do;
And when a reader tells me she is Mad about My Stuff,
I take her word as gospel, never knowing it is guff.

But though I may be credulous and easy and unwise,
I know the utterest untruth, the leader of the lies;
I know a man is lying, when, considerably cut,
He says: "I like a joke as well as anybody, but——"

Vers Libre

DRINK to me with thine eyes, exclusively,
And I will pledge with mine;
Or leave a kiss but in the cup,
And I shall not order any wines or liquors.
Soul-thirst
Demands divine drink;
Yet, even to Jovian nectar,
I prefer thine.

Recently I sent thee a wreath, a wreath of roses,
Not honouring thee, particularly—
Rather giving it a hope of
Immortality.
But thou merely breathedst on it
And returnedst it to me,
Since when it grows, and is redolent, I swear,
Not of itself. . . .
Nay! Its fragrance is of thee.

* * * *

John Spratt detested carbohydrates.
The deglutition of proteins, to his wife,
Was intolerable.
Wherefore, coöperating,
There was no waste
Of provender.

* * * *

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Weights and Measures

Twinkle, starlet,
Loftily, supramundanely, diamondly.

* * * *

Little Miss Muffet sat in a corner,
Absorbing casein—
A food of great nutritive power,
Rich in butter fats.
A spider—an arachnid of the species
Araneidae—came along;
Ugly, motive, horrendous,
Terrorizing her to the point of departure.

To a Young Man on the Platform of a Subway Express

BLITHE, whistling lad who yesterevening stood
Behind me on the Broadway subway's platform,
Your disposition may be bad or good,
Your will to pleasure may take this or that form.
You whistled, I believe, "Poor Butterfly,"
(I've heard the tune, and once you seemed to strike it)
Pray be not angry when I say that I
Don't like it.

I do not mind your piping off the key—
I sometimes err myself in that direction—
But when you whistle right in back of me,
I claim the right to offer mild objection:
Whistle whate'er you will, *sans* let or check,
To those who nightly pay the Shontsian nickels,
But do it elsewhere, please, than down my neck.
. . . It tickles.

Careless Lines on Labour

I

O YE that lie on the sandy beach,
With nothing whatever to do,
Beyond the beckoning, grasping reach
Of the city and all its crew—

II

There are pleasanter things in summertime
Than to coax the bashful laugh,
Than to build the lofty and careful rhyme,
And to prune a paragraph.

III

There are pleasanter things to do at night
Alluringer things by day,
Than to seek a subject on which to write
A merrily mirthsome lay.

IV

And so when it squeaks as I strike the strings,
And I long to be labour-free,
I just go and do those pleasanter things
I spoke of in II and III.

Halving It With Wither

IF SHE be not fair to me,
What care I how fair she be?
Still, if she be fair, why then
That is something else again.

Ballade of a Traveller's Jinx

OVER the country, from coast to coast,
I've travelled considerable, more or less;
I've been to Canarsie and Painted Post,
I've been to St. Louis and Holderness.
But withersoever I may progress.
With baggage enough for a fortnight's stay,
I find, with a sorrow I can't repress,
Mine is the trunk that goes astray.

I never—no, *never!*—was one to boast;
Though me the Graces have seemed to bless
With this honour, a greater than comes to most,
I bear it meekly, without duress.
Of other affairs I make no mess;
I'm lucky at every game I play;
Yet, packed with what clothing I may possess,
Mine is the trunk that goes astray.

Others who travel comprise a host
Carrying a million trunks, I guess;
But never the shadow, hint, or ghost
Of a chance one goes to the wrong address.
But *my* trunk travels the whole U. S.—
Or, as some might put it, the U. S. A.—
You ask me does it miscarry? YES!
Mine is the trunk that goes astray.

Ballade of a Traveller's Jinx

L'ENVOI

Prince, it worries me, I confess,
Every time that I go away.
And this is my major and one distress:
Mine is the trunk that goes astray.

Underneath the Bough

WHEN Omar smote his bloomin' lyre
About his quadruple desire,
There was no daily growing yell
About the rising c. of l.

A Loaf of Bread is costly now;
A Jug of Wine is high—and Thou!
Oh, girl! the never-ending payment
For all thy provender and raiment!

Pity the bard who pays the bill
For Bread and Wine and Lady Jill.
For stationary stays—ah, curses!
The royalty on a Book of Verses.

Frequently

I SHOT a poem into the air,
It was reprinted everywhere
From Bangor to the Rocky Range—
And always credited to

—Exchange.

The Flatterers

WHEN some folks meet a colyuming man,
They have the delightfullest way to flatter;
And this is about the general plan
Of the smilingly pleasant school of patter.

"Do you know, I know a couple of guys
Who prefer your pomes to the five-foot shelf?"
(As one who, merry and bright, implies:
"I never could see the stuff, myself.")

"My boy—he's still in his early teens—
He reads your things, whether short or long,
From beginning to end." (As one who means:
"The little chap never was very strong.")

"A friend of mine reads you every day—
Hasn't missed a column in over a year;
You mightn't believe it——" (As who should say:
"The feller was always a little queer.")

To the Vers Librist Who Uses Only the Minor Key:

TELL me not, O mournful poet,
Life is but an empty dream.
Well enough, alas! I know it,
And I'm weary of the theme.

Eheu, Fugaces!

LINES WRITTEN AFTER DR. DALY'S SONG IN "THE SORCERER," AND AFTER RECEIVING CONSTABULARY REPRIMAND FOR VIOLATING A TRAFFIC ORDINANCE.

TIME was when Sleep and I were well acquainted,
Time was when we walked ever hand in hand—
A slumbrous youth, with nervousness untainted,
No sleepier soul than I in all the land.
Time was when things like traffic regulations
Impressed me but as made for other men;
I never thought a thing of cells and stations—
Ah me! I was a fair young cyclist then!

Talked one of cars, I paid but scant attention;
Spoke one of gasolene, I gave no heed;
Magnetos were a thing I'd never mention;
And motor catalogues I would not read.
Time was when all my woes were paragraphic;
Time was when all my work was with a pen;
I used to have no trouble with the traffic—
Ah me! I was a fair young cyclist then!

The Bard's Annual Defiance

BRING on the spring—I am wearied of winter;
Come, O you summer—I sicken of cold.
Set up my metrical matter, O printer!
(Century 10-point, or Cheltenham bold.)

Yearn I diurnally now for the gentle
Ray of the May-day's inspiriting sun;
Long I for song and the sweet sentimental
Talk as I walk with a Definite One.

Go away, snow, I am wearied, I tell you—
Ill of the chill that has tarried too long!
Sprint away, winter, I long to farewell you—
Hey! for the May and the season of song!

Weights and Measures

Down with a town that is windy and sloppy!
Up with the cup that is symbol of spring!
Ho! for the poems we writers of copy
Make for the sake of the sound of the thing!

The Western Journalist

THIS was the burden of his song—
The Western pampbleteer—
"Fresh air does not a living make,
Nor climate a career."

"It's a wonderful town," said the newspaper man in Kansas City, Mo.,
"My job is rather an easy one—as jobs on a paper go.
The boys out here are a lively crowd, our sheet is there with a punch;
My house is only a mile from the shop and I always go home for lunch.
I've grown attached to the breezy town"—and he took me by the sleeve
And added: "Yes, I'm fond of the place, and I'd certainly hate to leave.
I never can like a town so well as Kansas City, Mo.
Good by . . . If you hear of a job in New York, will you promise to let me know?"

"I knew you'd like our beautiful town," said the Denver reporting guy.
"It's sunny every day in the year, and the city's a whole mile high.
Our death rate now is the lowest ever known in this part of the West;
Our system of parks is perfect—it is known as the nation's best.

Weights and Measures

The melons we get in the summer—well, you ought to be here in May—
Are better, I guess, than you'll ever see on Wall Street or on Broadway.
No, it isn't much of a newspaper town—that is its one defect.
Good by . . . If you hear of a job in New York, just wire me at once, collect."

"Some town is right," said the genial, able, earnest slave of the pen.
"It's a wonderful place to live, all right"—he was talking about Cheyenne.
"I've learned a lot since I've been out here; Wyoming's a wonderful state.
The air, the ranches, the mountains, the folks—the whole darned thing is great.
I doubt if I'd like it anywhere else; it grows on a man out here;
We've sunshine practically every day in the pleasant time of the year.
But the newspaper game is pretty dead, and I wouldn't, of course, decline
A job in New York. If you hear of one, I wish you'd drop me a line."

"Los Angeles is a lovely town," said a journalistic youth.
"The stories about the climate here don't approximate half the truth.

The Western Journalist

It's a wonderful place to live in, but the newspaper
game is slow;
So if you hear of a job down East, will you promise
to let me know?"

"The liveliest town in the country, this," said the
San Francisco lad.
"The papers here are a prosperous lot, but the
pay is pretty bad.
I'd like a whack at the New York game, for a
couple of years, at least;
Just let me know, when you get back home, if
you hear of a job down East."

Thus ran the burden of his song—
The Western pamphleteer—
"Fresh air does not a living make,
Nor climate a career."

Ballade of Egregiousness

I'VE travelled now from coast to coast—
I came back only yesterday—
I've been from Banff to Painted Post
From Harrisburgh to Monterey,
From Cedarhurst to San José,
From Santa Cruz to Valley Forge—
And yet, on all my witless way,
I never called a waiter "George."

I toured the country, same as most
Who pilgrimage in quest of play.
I paid two bits for buttered toast,
And ninety cents for *pêche gelée.*
I was a hick, the same as they
Who come from Huntington* or Norge †;
But though I seemed replete with hay,
I never called a waiter "George."

I never was a bard to boast,
I never was a lad to bray;
But do I not deserve a "Pros't!",
A cross, a wreath of laurel-spray,
For that, in diner and café,
At jitney meal, Lucullan org-
Y, dinner, luncheon, *déjeuner,*
I never called a waiter "George"?

*Ind.
†Okla.

Ballade of Egregiousness

L'ENVOI

Cast me, O Prince, in Hudson Bay,
Shoot me across the Royal Gorge,
But O remember, ere you slay,
I never called a waiter "George."

To the Returned Girls

WILL you read my little pome,
O you girls returnéd home
From a summertime of sport
At the Jolliest Resort,
From a Heated Term of joys
Far from urban dust and noise?

You I speak to in this rhyme,
You have had a Glorious Time
Swimming, golfing, bridging, dancing,
Riding, tennising, romancing,
On the springboard, on the raft—
You've been often photographed.

At the place you have forsaken,
You have had some pictures taken,
Pictures taken of you dancing,
Riding, tennising, romancing,
Swimming, golfing, and reclining;
Snacking, luncheoning, and dining.

Cometh now my brief advice;
Ladies, be ye ne'er so nice,
Be ye ne'er so fascinating,
Luring, drawing, captivating,
If with interest you'd imbue us,
Do not show those pictures to us!

To the Returned Girls

Snapshots of the links and lawn
Cause in many of us a yawn;
(As for me myself, why, I'm
Glad to see 'em any time)
But—I give it to you square—
Lots of people do not care.

The Boundaries of Appreciation

WHEN someone pulls a droll idea,
When someone thrusts a jocund jab,
I laugh right out. You can't call me a
Crab.

The dollars that I spend are many
To get a little bit of fun;
I like a joke as well as any
One.

I never elevate mine eyebrow
At what another thinks is rough;
I do not have to have the highbrow
Stuff.

Yet nothing keeps my heart from sinking—
Alas! how then my spirits droop—
At jokes about the noise of drinking
Soup.

And though I have a quenchless yearning
For any quip or crank or wheeze,
I cannot smile at jokes concerning
Cheese.

I used to blame this lovely climate;
But deep deliberation shows
Me why I have so sad a time at
Shows.

Efficiency

I

FOR one who is volitient
That matters move along,
It's fine to be efficient
In labour or in song.

II

Avoid all kinds of effort,
Shun every stress and strain.
Don't put a needless burden
Upon your heart and brain.

III

Now, in the opening stanza
Which started rather fine,
I made the rhymes alternate—
Or every other line.

IV

("Which started" is a mouthful
And difficult to say.
I might have made it smoother
By working half a day.)

V

(Nor is the word alTERnate;
I find, when I consult
The dictionary, accent
Is on th' antepenult).

VI

But if I stopped to bother
With little things like this,
The wear upon my engine
Would make it skip, or miss.

VII

They tell me that the "Elegy"
Composed by Thomas Gray
Took seven years to finish,
At seven hours a day.

VIII

How absolutely sinful
To waste that precious time
In polishing and pruning
The roughnesses of rhyme!

Efficiency

IX

At eight nineteen this evening
  As true as I'm alive,
I wrote that opening stanza—
  Now it's eight twenty-five.

X

Efficiency! That does it!
  Efficiency's the word!
It makes you feel that labour
  Is utterly absurd.

XI

Observe the Roman numerals;
  Although they are no use,
I find them, altogether,
  Efficient as the deuce.

XII

Observe the 9-point Old Style—
  A clear and lovely face.
I find it efficacious
  Annihilating space.

Weights and Measures

XIII

I point with prideful finger
  To this efficient rhyme
Composed with hardly any
  Expenditure of time.

XIV

Composed with absolutely
  No waste of heart or brain,
No prodigal rhythmatics,
  No lyric legerdemain.

XV

Having conserved my forces,
  And husbanded my art,
I'm just as fresh this minute
  As I was at the start.

XVI

I waste no "punch," no climax,
  For it would be a crime
To put a timely wallop
  In an efficient rhyme.

Efficiency

XVII

Here's my efficient poem.
  You think it's bad? You do?
Like most efficient persons,
  I never thought of you.

Footlight Motifs

I

MRS. VERNON CASTLE

THE fair and utter grace of you,
  The witchery of your glance,
The young, the lovely face of you,
  Delight me when you dance.

The lithe and supple charms of you,
  Softer than melted air,
The rippling, billowing arms of you—
  O Lady, you are there!

Or that I end this lay of you,
  Fain would I ask one thing:
I love most every way of you,
  But—Lady, must you sing?

II

PHOEBE FOSTER

I SIGHED for themes to write on;
  A subject for my pen
To work its matchless might on—
Worthy my skill—and then—

A maid hight—Phoebe Foster
Swam—dove—into my ken.
I gazed and gazed and sighed, amazed;
"Oh for a worthy pen!"

III

GABY DESLYS

THY voice hath naught of the Lorelei lure
To hold men in its thrall;
Of pitch and key thou art oft not sure
At all.

Thy form and features, thy teeth and hair
To others may seem a feast.
I know of a thousand maids as fair,
At least.

Of piquant ways and I-don't-know-what,
Of merriment, art, and wit,
It seemeth to me that thou hast not
A bit.

I never was one to raise my brow,
I never was one to scoff;
But I simply can't see, my dear, where thou
Get'st off.

IV

NATALIE ALT

GENTLE, modest little flower,"
(Gilbert's self is whom I quote),
Were the warder of this Tower
But a bard of strength and power,
Not a paper pote—
This would be a lasting line
Telling you you are divine.

"Sadly lacking in our land,"
(Quoting as I start to sing)
Are the maidens I can stand
Staring at and hearing—and
Wholly everything.
Falter, feet! and metre halt!
When ye seek to sing Miss Alt.

"This the close of every song"—
This the finishing of mine:
Every lyric, short or long,
Always tries to tap the gong
In the final line.
Wherefore I confess to be
Nutty over Natalie.

The Italics Are Richard Gifford's

VERSE sweetens toil, however rude the sound;
She feels no biting pang the while she sings;
Nor, as she turns the giddy wheel around,
Revolves the sad vicissitudes of things.

No pang to me my minnesinging brings;
I pen my poems by the very pound.
(They say, whene'er one strikes the lyric strings,
Verse sweetens toil, however rude the sound.)

My reckless muse, ungirdled and uncrowned,
Sings on, sings on of cabbages and kings;
Skyward she soars, or digs below the ground—
She feels no biting pang the while she sings.

Coherence to the well-known winds she flings;
She cares not if the clock of Time be wound,
Nor recks she, as she plays, if wealth have wings,
Nor as she turns the giddy wheel around.

She muses on the souls confined and bound;
On barren winters and on sapful springs;
And as she stands upon her airy mound,
Revolves the sad vicissitudes of things.

Weights and Measures

I like a poem when it sort of swings,
And floats and sinks—at times you think it's
drowned—
And lives, and dies, and falls away, and clings.
But, in a long career, I've never found
Verse sweetens toil.

To the Railroad Men

O BROTHERHOOD of Engineers,
O Brotherhood of Train- and Firemen,
Gaze on the suppliant salty tears
Wept by this lowliest of the lyremen.

O mighty railroad presidents,
Debating how to help the nation
By saving corporate expense—
Harken to mine interrogation:

What is there in the common law,
The statutes of exchange and barter,
From Portland to Communipaw,
What is there in the railroads' charter—

What is there—something, I am sure;
What is there—this my query weighty—
That makes you keep the temperature
Of so-called sleeping cars at 80?

To Myrtilla of New York

THE Rockies, I own, are a beautiful sight;
The canyons are glories to see;
I found in the spruce undiluted delight,
And the pine is a capable tree;
I throbbed when I gazed at the snow-covered peaks,
And worshipped the view from the crest;
I revelled in Nature a couple of weeks,
But there's nothing like you in the West,
My dear,
There's nothing like you in the West.

The trout are an agile and esculent fish.
And swift are the streams where they run;
No lovelier sight could a citizen wish
Than Long's at the rise of the sun.
Oh, myriad the wonders that gave me a thrill,
And frequently I was impressed—
But nevertheless it is true, Myrtil,
There's nothing like *you* in the West—
That's right—
There's nothing like you in the West.

Roundel

SPRING, again I'm due to
  Try some carolling
Trill a note or two to
    Spring.

Briefly, it's my cue to
  Celebrate and sing
Her I may be true to.

Take these flowers I strew to
  Mean most anything. . . .
I have nothing new to
    Spring.

Lines to a Beautiful and Bus-riding Lady

O THOU who wert seated ahead of
This bard on an Avenue bus,
Thy beauty is such as I've read of,
O'er which I could make quite a fuss.
Thou travelledst yesterday morning,
I deemed thee considerable queen;
A veil, and a black one, adorning
Thy beautiful bean.

Though dreadful was I to distress thee,
So meek, inarticulate, shy
This bard that I feared to address thee,
To risk an indignant reply.
And yet, as I sat in repentance
And felt on my features thy veil,
I struggled to frame thee a sentence,
And struggled to fail.

But here in the calm and the quiet,
When all is inspiringly still,
I rather imagine I'll try it. . . .
I shall. I'll go further. . . . I will.
O lady accoutred and geared with
That veil, for thy pardon thy sue:
I feared that my face interfered with
Thy veil as it blew.

"Ladies, Whose Bright Eyes"

LADIES, whose bright eyes illuminate the city,
Blinding us who fare along the city streets,
May I voice a plea, briefly, in a ditty
Fashioned in a way unknown to Keats?

When the light from you scintillates and glimmers,
"Ladies, whose bright eyes" are either blue or brown,
Don't you sort of think you ought to use your dimmers
While you're in the limits of the town?

Lines from a Plutocratic Poetaster to a Ditch-digger

SULLEN, grimy, labouring person,
As I passed you in my car,
I could sense your muffled curse on
It and me and my cigar;
And though mute your malediction,
I could feel it on my head,
As in countless works of fiction
I have read.

Envy of mine obvious leisure
Seemed to green your glittering eye;
Hate for mine apparent pleasure
Filled you as I motored by.
You who had to dig for three, four
Hours in that unpleasant ditch,
Loathed, despised, and hated me for
Being rich.

And you cursed me into Hades
As you envied me that ride
With the loveliest of ladies
Sitting at my dexter side;
And your wish, or your idea,
Was to hurl us off some cliff.
I could see that you thought me a
Lucky stiff.

Lines to a Ditch-digger

If you came to the decision,
  As my car you mutely cussed,
That allotment and division
  Are indecently unjust—
Labouring man, however came you
  Thus to think the world awry,
I should be the last to blame you . . .
    So do I.

Villanelle, with Stevenson's Assistance

THE world is so full of a number of things
Like music and pictures and statues and plays,
I'm sure we should all be as happy as kings.

We've winters and summers and autumns and springs,
We've Aprils and Augusts, Octobers and Mays—
The world is so full of a number of things.

Though minor the key of my lyrical strings,
I change it to major when paeaning praise:
I'm sure we should all be as happy as kings.

Each morning a myriad wonderments brings,
Each evening a myriad marvels conveys,
The world is so full of a number of things.

With pansies and roses and pendants and rings,
With purples and yellows and scarlets and grays,
I'm sure we should all be as happy as kings.

So pardon a bard if he carelessly sings
A solo indorsing these Beautiful Days—
The world is so full of a number of things,
I'm sure we should all be as happy as kings.

With a Copy of Calverley

WHEN, lady, you applaud my rhymes
Appearing in the public prints,
(As you have done a dozen times),
I wince.

A bead (or two) bepearls my brow;
I modestly say "Pooh!" or "Tush!"
I'd blush, I think, if I knew how
To blush.

Once, when your praise was too absurd,
I spoke of Calverley. With vim
And scorn you said: "I never heard
Of him."

Tottered my reason, shook my nerve,
I stifled an uprising sob.
"Has she," I wondered, "heard of Irv-
In Cobb?"

Take, lady, then, this blithesome book—
My friend, philosopher, and guide—
And don't, I pray, forget to look
Inside.

How fair the rhymes! The verse how fresh!
Like "one clear harp in divers tones."
Read "Flight," "Forever,"—oh, read "Precious Stones"!

Weights and Measures

Here, all this treasured tome throughout,
  Shall you find undiluted joy.
You, in your classic phrase, will shout
    "Oh, *boy!*"

Yet pricks the thorn upon the rose;
  And lurks the wormwood in the cup:
Calverley. . . . Lady, how he shows
    Me up!

Ballade of Schopenhauer's Philosophy

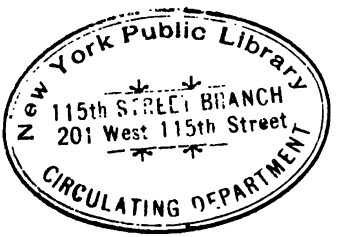
WISHFUL to add to my mental power,
Avid of knowledge and wisdom, I
Pondered the Essays of Schopenhauer,
Taking his terrible hills on high.
Worried I was, and a trifle shy,
Fearful I'd find him a bit opaque!
Thus does he say, with a soul-sick sigh:
"The best you get is an even break."

Life, he says, is awry and sour;
Life, he adds, is sour and awry;
Love, he says, is a withered flower;
Love, he adds, is a dragon-fly;
Love, he swears, is the Major Lie;
Life, he vows, is the Great Mistake;
No one can beat it, and few can tie.
The best you get is an even break.

Women, he says, are clouds that lower;
Women dissemble and falsify.
(Those are things that The Conning Tower
Cannot asseverate or deny.)
Futile to struggle, and strain, and try;
Pleasure is freedom from pain and ache;
The greatest thing you can do is die—
The best you get is an even break.

L'ENVOI

Gosh! I feel like a real good cry!
Life, he says, is a cheat, a fake.
Well, I agree with the grouchy guy—
The best you get is an even break.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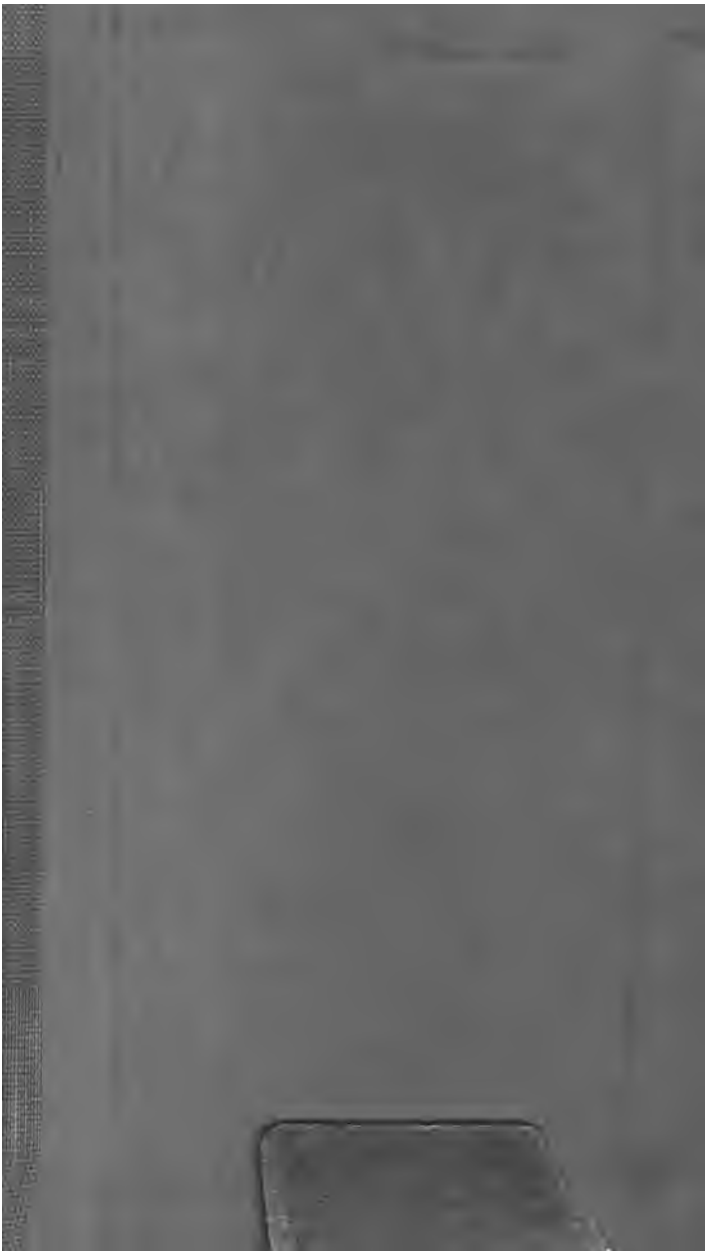
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